

Winning The Hearts And Minds Of Social Media Users



Written By
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Salutations,

The gentle art of mass persuasion has gained new meaning with the introduction of social media. Unlike most mass media, social media follows the population through personal handheld devices, devices on our work desks, and devices on our bookshelves at home. The degree of persuasion and the results can be accurately gauged through audience engagement and reaction to content almost instantaneously.

Adequate research, planning, creation, and engagement must be accomplished to fully engage an audience and create an atmosphere that provides a window of opportunity for a shift of perception to be achieved. All these steps should be thoroughly discussed and analyzed to achieve the desired results and fully documented for later analysis and review.

David Childers
Sui Generis
24 January 2023

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Alvin Toffler

Inspiration By Robert Plant - Heaven knows

Cover Graphic

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You must either conquer and rule or serve and lose,
suffer or triumph, be the anvil or the hammer.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.



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Index

<u>Introduction</u>	6
<u>The Ability To Change</u>	8
<u>Content Creation</u>	9
- Planning Content Creation	9
- Defining The Narrative Of A Topic Of Discussion	10
- How To Critically Analyze Facts To Persuade Others	10
- How To Control The Outcome Of A Discussion	11
- Ensure Continuity Of Content For Target Audience	11
- Use Multiple Types Of Content To Create A Clear And Concise Message	11
<u>Content Development</u>	
- Crucial Elements	12
- Theme	12
- Emotion	13
- Music	13
- Color	13
- Background Imagery	13
<u>Content Components</u>	14
<u>Tracking The Audience</u>	15
<u>Techniques Of Propaganda</u>	16
<u>Reference</u>	25

Introduction

The use of social media can be used to alter individual perceptions by incorporating influential elements that change a person's outlook. (External Cognitive Automatic Processing Stimulation - ECAPS). This approach is based on the idea that social media can serve as a platform for providing users with alternative information, allowing them to think differently about topics and fundamentally change their perspectives. With the application of ECAPS, this "new" information can encourage users to focus on specific issues and quickly remember details related to a particular target topic.

An ECAPS enhanced social media message can present users with questions or tasks related to a particular topic. As the users complete the tasks, their conclusions are enhanced by providing them with external mental stimulation. This stimulation could include providing relevant facts, pictures, and videos to help them understand a topic from a different perspective and encourage them to make alternative decisions based on the new outlook. The platform could also provide users with reinforcement of the issue through additional information and the importance of following through with the individual shift of perception.

Overall, using ECAPS enhanced social media messages can be beneficial in helping users change their outlook, think differently, and obtain a different approach to a topic. The target audience can be guided to adopt a suggested attitude to a specific topic through specially crafted information and personalized feedback.

There are several methods for altering the perceptions and mindsets of people.

Controlling the thought process through the use of external influences is possible in a variety of ways. For example, media and advertising can influence how we think and view the world. Additionally, peer pressure can control what we think or believe. Finally, people in positions of authority, such as teachers, leaders, and politicians, can shape our thoughts and opinions.

The ability to change people's views and ways of thinking can also be achieved through various methods, such as persuasive language, fear tactics, guilt, and manipulation of information. It can also take the form of psychological manipulation when people are misled or lied to influence their thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

Techniques Of Propaganda

Another method is the introduction of thought reform, which is any process that substantially alters a person or group's beliefs and attitudes, usually through coercive tactics. This process typically involves using psychological and/or emotional manipulation to change the beliefs and behavior of the subject.

Controlling the narrative of a discussion is essential as it is the technique used to alter an individual's outlook on a topic. Governments, organizations, and individuals often employ these methods to gain control over a person or group. Techniques used can range from psychological manipulation to other forms of behavioral conditioning.

Lastly, Psychological conditioning is a process that uses reinforcement and punishment to teach a particular behavior or response. It involves associating a stimulus, such as a sound or sight, with a desired behavior or response. The expected response becomes ingrained in the person's behavior through repetition and reinforcement.

Choosing the suitable method to achieve the desired results is essential to ensure that the outcome is conducted promptly and cost-effectively. It is possible to utilize several measures operating in tandem with each other; however, it is crucial to ensure that each element allows unity in achieving the desired outcome and does not conflict.

The Ability To Change

A purpose must be established as to why a change should take place, and this message for change must remain consistent throughout the entire life cycle of the social media engagement process. This purpose must revolve around establishing a credible and definable reason for a change to take place or why people need to adjust or change their perceptions regarding a specific item, area, or place of interest. This perceived need for change must be easily relatable and understood to be something that directly affects the target audience and can be of great benefit. The target audience must feel inclusive regarding this purpose of and for change.

The next step is to establish or define how the change should be achieved. Defining a process for the change will allow a combined effort toward achieving the desired change results. If the process for change is cumbersome or time consuming, It may be necessary to break down the change process into several smaller steps over an extended period of time. Breaking down an enormous, complicated task into smaller easier to accomplish tasks will allow maximizing the possibility for overall adoption of the desired changes. Providing the target audience with the necessary steps and guidance for making the desired change will help establish uniformity and create a structured and logical process for achieving the desired actions. Uniformity of the change process also reduces the chances of people going outside the scope of the desired changes.

Identifying the relevant target audience is crucial as this will result in focused engagement for both the recipient and the ability to convey specific information. This will also prevent excessive use of resources and personnel to attempt to engage persons who will not benefit the cause. Subsets of a target audience can also be identified for enhanced information opportunities. (For example, those persons who are borderline on making a choice and may support a change if they receive additional information.) Different audience participants can be identified and designated on various social media platforms as well.

Defining the target audience can consist of several indicators, which may include but not necessarily be limited to the following identifying characteristics:

Age	Education Level	Income
Race	Political Affiliation	Job Type
Ethnicity	Language(s) Spoken	Location
Gender Preference	Recreational Activities	Housing

All research and planning associated with operational mission development should be retained for after action review and for future comparative planning purposes.

Content Creation

Planning Content Creation

1. Research and Ideation: Start by researching the topic and brainstorming ideas to ensure the content is relevant and informative to the target audience.
2. Outline The Content: Create an outline of what needs to be included in the content after researching.
3. Writing: Start writing content based on the outline, filling in the necessary information and details.
4. Editing and Revision: Edit the content for accuracy, typos, grammar, and readability once it has been written.
5. Layout and Design: Create a layout and design once the content is ready. The format should include any images, videos, infographics, etc.
6. Publishing: Finally, publish the content on the necessary platforms
7. Promotion: After publishing the content, promote it.

Defining The Narrative Of A Topic Of Discussion

1. Identify the purpose of the discussion: What is the intended outcome of the discussion?
2. Establish the context: What background information will help inform the discussion?
3. Develop a structure: How should the discussion be organized to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the topic?
4. Identify critical points: What are the key issues that should be discussed?
5. Establish a timeline: How long should the discussion take?
6. Define desired outcomes: What should be the desired outcomes of the discussion?
7. Set a tone: What kind of tone should be established for the discussion?
8. Establish rules of engagement: What guidelines should be established to ensure a productive discussion?
9. Identify resources: What resources should be available to inform the discussion?
10. Plan for follow-up: How should the discussion be followed up?

How To Critically Analyze Facts To Persuade Others

1. Gather information: Collect facts and evidence to help you make your argument. Make sure the information is relevant and up-to-date.
2. Analyze the information: Carefully review the facts you have gathered and consider how they relate to your argument. Ask yourself questions such as, "What does this information tell me?" and "How does this information support my argument?"
3. Identify counterarguments: Think about potential arguments that could be made against the point of view. Be sure to consider alternate points of view and how you could address them.
4. Organize your ideas: Create an outline of your argument that includes the facts and evidence you want to present. Think about how you can effectively present your argument, including how you will address counterarguments.
5. Present your argument: Use your outline to craft your statement clearly and concisely. Explain how your facts and evidence support your point of view.
6. Respond to counterarguments: Take the time to address any potential counterarguments that could be raised. Explain why your argument is more substantial and better supported by the facts and evidence.
7. Summarize your argument: End your argument by summarizing your main points and reiterating why your idea is more relevant.

How To Control The Outcome Of A Discussion

1. Set an agenda: Before beginning a discussion, be sure to set a clear agenda, so you know what topics will be covered and in what order.
2. Listen: During the discussion, listen to what other people have to say. Make sure to respond to their comments and consider their points of view.
3. Ask questions: Keep the conversation moving by asking relevant questions that will help to further the discussion.
4. Be respectful: Make sure to show respect for everyone involved in the discussion. Avoid name-calling or other forms of disrespect.
5. Make a decision: Once all the points have been discussed, make a decision that everyone supports. If it is not possible to reach a consensus, then find a compromise that everyone can agree upon relevant to the topic discussed.

Ensure Continuity Of Content For Target Audience

1. Make sure you have a consistent message throughout all the content.
2. Use consistent branding and visuals across all of the content.
3. Develop a content calendar to track when and how often the content is posted.
4. Promote the content in multiple ways, if possible.
5. Respond to feedback and questions from your audience to show that you are engaging with them.
6. Use analytics to track the reach of the content and make adjustments as needed.
7. Monitor trends for the overall topic and adjust the content accordingly.
8. Focus on quality over quantity and ensure the content provides the needed information about the topic.

Use Multiple Types Of Content To Create A Clear And Concise Message

1. Video: A short video that briefly presents the core message of your campaign.
2. Infographic: An eye-catching infographic that outlines the critical points of the campaign in an easy-to-understand format.
3. Copy: A brief written summary of the message that can be used in multiple places, such as in email campaigns or website copy.
4. Images: Photos or illustrations that help to illustrate the message and engage viewers.
5. Social Media Posts: Short, creative posts to share on social media that will help spread the message.

Content Development

Crucial Elements

These Elements must be considered when creating content.

Make the message concise, clear, focused, and easy to understand. (Keep It Simple Stupid) Do not overcomplicate the message or use fluff in the presentation, as this may cause confusion or apathy within the audience.

Keep the message small and bit sized. Lengthy presentations can be boring to some and may cause the audience to leave. Consider making a series of shorter presentations; if there is a need to present lots of information, consider making a series of shorter presentations. Shorter presentations are also ideal for quickly sharing with others.

Ensure that the beginning of the message stands out and gets the audience's attention. This will entice the audience to continue and pull them further into the content.

End your message with a direct call to action. It is essential to explain why taking action is necessary or important and how this action should be accomplished.

The purpose of the message is to make your audience understand it and desire to support the cause.

When creating content or a presentation, it is crucial to ensure that the message is professionally designed.

- Poorly created content will make people scorn the message and turn them away.
- Ensure that proper grammar and spelling are used.
- Ensure that adequate lighting levels are used for creating video presentations.
- Ensure that the video capture area of the presentation centers on the message content or the speaker - not extraneous surroundings.
- Ensure that adequate audio levels are used for creating audio and video presentations.
- Ensure audio microphones are placed near all speakers, allowing precise and distinct talking audio to be recorded.

Using a theme in a narrative can help to enhance the emotional sensitivity of the reader. This response can be achieved by conveying the author's message through the use of symbols, motifs, and characters that are connected to the theme. These elements can create a deeper level of understanding for the reader about the message being conveyed. For example, a story about loss and grief could use a theme of hope to give the readers a sense of optimism and provide a sense of resolution to the narrative. In addition, a theme can be used to create a stronger connection between the characters and the reader by allowing the reader to relate to the characters' experiences. Using a theme allows the narrative to evoke a stronger emotional response from the reader.

Emotion is a powerful tool to create a desired response in a narrative. By making the reader feel the emotion of the characters, the reader can relate to the story and become invested in it. To create a powerful emotional response in a narrative, the writer can use techniques such as vivid imagery, sensory language, and plot twists to evoke strong emotions in the reader. Additionally, readers can become even more engaged in the narrative by including characters with whom they can identify and relate to. Furthermore, strong themes and motifs can be used to strengthen the desired emotion. Ultimately, the use of emotion can be an effective way to create a response in a narrative and deepen the reader's connection to the story.

Music can be used to strengthen the emotional response of a narrative by creating a mood and driving the emotion of the story. Music can be used to emphasize moments of drama, tension, or joy and can be used to evoke a range of emotions, from nostalgia to excitement. Music can help to create a sense of suspense or anticipation and can be used to evoke a range of emotions, from sadness to joy. Music can also help to enhance the atmosphere of a narrative, allowing the audience to connect more deeply with the characters and the events taking place.

Color can be used to strengthen the emotional response of a narrative by creating a mood and setting the tone. For instance, if a scene is meant to be peaceful and calming, a warm, pastel color palette can be used to create a sense of peace and tranquility. Conversely, if a scene is supposed to be tense and dark, a cold, dark color palette can be used to create a sense of dread and unease. Color can also be used to contrast emotions, such as using bright colors to emphasize the happiness of a moment or using dark colors to emphasize the sadness of a moment.

Background imagery can be used to evoke a strong emotional response in a narrative by creating a visual landscape that reflects the story's atmosphere. For example, if the narrative focuses on a dark and mysterious setting, the background images could be of a dark and foreboding forest or a gloomy and abandoned city. On the other hand, if the narrative is more lighthearted and humorous, the background images could be of a sunny beach or a vibrant and colorful city skyline. In either case, the background images can help to establish a particular mood and evoke a strong emotional response in the reader.

It is essential to take all the individual elements of a production and create a compelling narrative that will increase the overall awareness of the audience toward a desired goal. The story should be structured in a method that will engage the audience and create a captivating experience. Using various elements that include a plot, theme, emotional conveyance, music, color, and background imagery, allows a narrative to successfully convey a message or idea to the audience. Additionally, it is essential to consider the narrative's form, language, and style to ensure an effective delivery. The combination of these elements makes the narrative compelling and effective in its goal.

Content Components

Who

- Who the message is targeting. (audience)
- Who the message is about. (person - group - organization)

What

- What the message is about.

Where

- Where the message is referring to. (village - city - country - region)

When

- What time is relative to the message. (time - day - month - year)

Why

- Why is the message being sent. (purpose - importance)

How

- Action required - needed - expressed by the message. (how do achieve action)

Emotion

- The emotion of the message. (happy - sad - fearful)

Sub Elements

The sub elements should interact with the textual message and bring focus to its meaning.

Foreground Pictures

- These should incorporate imagery about the target audience or the object of the message.

Music - Background Pictures - Colors

- These should intensify the emotion and nature of the textual message.

Tracking The Audience

Monitoring the audience's response to content posts can provide detailed information about engagement characteristics that can be measured through quantitative analysis of posted content.

Audience data can consist of but are not limited to the following examples:

Measurement of the number of post likes.

Measurement of the number of post emojis.

Measurement of the number of post shares.

Measurement of the number of post dislikes.

Measurement of the number of post followers.

Measurement of the number of post comments.

Measurement of the number of #HashTag posts.

Measurement of the number of @Mention posts.

Measurement of the number of post impressions.

Measurement of the number of multimedia content views.

Measurement of the number of mentions of key information points or specific words.

Measurement of the Amplification Rate or the ratio of shares per post to the number of overall followers.

Measurement of the Engagement Rate or the ratio of likes per post to the number of overall views of the post.

Measurement of the Reach Rate or the ratio of actions taken by users per post that are not part of your established social circle of contacts.

This data can be monitored on a per item basis or for overall general audience metrics to indicate the rise and fall of activity associated with posted content.

- Hourly

- Weekly

- Yearly

- Daily

- Monthly

Techniques Of Propaganda

Propaganda is a communication method used to influence or persuade a specific audience to further an agenda. This method of presentation is typically not objective and may selectively present facts to encourage a particular outlook or perception. Propaganda may also use loaded language to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information that is being presented.

Ad hominem

This is the attack of one's opponent instead of attacking their arguments.

Ad nauseam

This is the continuous repetition of an idea. An idea, especially a simple slogan that is repeated enough times, may begin to be taken as the truth. This approach is more effective when the propagandist limits or controls the media.

Agenda setting

This is the capability of media organizations to alter the relative importance placed on topics. The audience will regard issues as more important if a news item is covered frequently and prominently, and issues that are covered less often will be perceived as negligible.

Appeal to authority

This is a request for prominent figures to support a position, idea, argument or course of action.

Appeal to fear

This seeks to build support by instilling anxieties and panic in the general population regarding a topic.

Appeal to prejudice

This uses loaded or emotional terms to assign value or moral goodness to those that believe in a specific attitude.

Bandwagon

Bandwagon and "inevitable-victory" appeals are an attempt to persuade the target audience to join in and take the course of action that "everyone else is taking."

- Inevitable victory invites those not already on the bandwagon to join those already on the road to inevitable success. The target audience already, or at least partially on the bandwagon, are reassured that staying onboard is their best course of action.

- Join the crowd reinforces people's natural desire to be on the winning side. This technique is used to convince the audience that a program is an expression of an irresistible mass movement and that it is in their best interest to join.

Beautiful people

This deals with famous people or depicts attractive, happy people and suggests that if people buy a product or follow a particular ideology, they will also be happy or prosperous. This is typically used for advertising rather than political purposes.

Big lie

This is the repeated articulation of complex events that justify subsequent action. The descriptions of these events have elements of truth, and the "big lie" generalizations merge and eventually supplant the public's accurate perception of the underlying circumstances.

Black-and-white fallacy

This is the presentation of only two choices, with the product or idea being advanced as the better choice. (e.g., "You are either with us, or against us....")

Cherry picking

Selecting specific information, concepts, or ideas to rationalize a particular outlook while making the rationalization appear to be encompassing.

Classical conditioning

This behavior is implanted and elicits an automatic response that is paired with a specific stimulus. This creates a behavior that happens unconsciously.

Cognitive dissonance

This is the rationalization of contradictory information. Suppose a pollster finds that a specific group of people hates his candidate for senator but really likes a particular actor. They use the actor's endorsement of their candidate to change people's minds because people cannot tolerate inconsistency. They are forced to either dislike the actor or like the candidate.

Common man

This attempts to convince the audience that the propagandist's positions reflect the people's shared beliefs. It is designed to win the confidence of the audience by communicating in the ordinary manner and style of the target audience. Propagandists use everyday language and mannerisms (and clothe their message in face-to-face and audiovisual communications) while attempting to identify their point of view with that of the average person.

Cult of personality

This arises when an individual uses mass media to create an idealized and heroic public image, often through unquestioning flattery and praise. The hero personality then advocates the positions that the propagandist desires to promote. For example, modern propagandists hire popular personalities to promote their ideas or products.

Demonizing the enemy

This suggests making individuals from the opposing nation, from a different ethnic group, or those who support the opposing viewpoint appear to be subhuman, worthless, or immoral through suggestion or false accusations. Dehumanizing is also a term used synonymously with demonizing; the latter usually serves as an aspect of the former.

Demoralization

This is the direction of information towards an adversary to erode fighting spirit and encourage surrender or defection.

Dictat

This is used to simplify the decision making process by using images and words, including interjection words, to tell the audience precisely what actions to take, eliminating any other possible choices. Authority figures can be used to give the order, overlapping it with the appeal to authority technique, but not necessarily.

Disinformation

This is the creation or deletion of information for the purpose of making a false record of an event or the actions of a person or organization, including outright forgery of photographs, motion pictures, broadcasts, and sound recordings, as well as printed documents.

Divide and rule

This is the ability to gain and maintain power by breaking up large concentrations of power into pieces that individually have less power than the one implementing the strategy.

Door-in-the-face technique

This is used to convince the respondent to comply by making a large request that the respondent will most likely turn down, much like an analogy of slamming a door in the persuader's face. The respondent is more likely to agree to a second, more reasonable request than if that request is made in isolation.

Dysphemism

This is an expression with a negative connotation. It is the opposite of a euphemism.

Euphemism

This is a generally harmless word or expression used in place of one that may be found offensive or suggest something unpleasant.

Euphoria

This is the use of an event that generates euphoria or happiness or using an appealing event to boost morale. Euphoria can be created by declaring a holiday, making luxury items available, or mounting a military parade with marching bands and patriotic messages.

Exaggeration

This occurs when the most fundamental aspects of a statement are factual, but only to a certain degree. It is also seen as "stretching the truth" or making something appear more powerful, meaningful, or accurate than it actually is.

False accusations

This is a claim or allegation of wrongdoing that is untrue or otherwise unsupported by facts. These claims can be used in any of the following contexts: informally in everyday life, quasi-judicially, or judicially.

Fear, uncertainty, and doubt

(Also abbreviated as FUD.) This is an attempt to influence public perception by disseminating negative and dubious/false information designed to undermine the credibility of their beliefs.

Firehose of falsehood

A large number of messages are broadcast rapidly, repetitively, and continuously over multiple channels (such as news and social media) without regard for truth or consistency.

Flag-waving

An attempt to justify an action because doing so will make one more patriotic or in some way benefit a group, country, or idea. The feeling of patriotism this technique attempts to inspire may not necessarily diminish or entirely omit one's capability for rational examination of the matter in question.

Foot-in-the-door technique

This compliance tactic aims at getting a person to agree to a large request by having them agree to a modest proposal first. This technique creates a connection between the person asking for a request and the person being asked. If a smaller request is granted, then the person agreeing feels obligated to keep agreeing to larger requests to stay consistent with the original decision of agreeing.

Framing (social sciences)

This is the social construction of a social phenomenon, often by mass media sources, political or social movements, political leaders, or other actors and organizations. It is an inevitable process of selective influence over the individual's perception of the meanings attributed to words or phrases.

Gaslighting

This is persistent denial, misdirection, contradiction, and lying to sow seeds of doubt in a target individual or group, hoping to make them question their memory, perception, sanity, and norms.

Gish gallop

This is the bombardment of a political opponent with obnoxiously complex questions in rapid fire during a debate to make the opponent appear not to know what they are speaking about.

Glittering generalities

These are emotionally appealing words that are applied to a product or idea, but present no concrete argument or analysis. This technique has also been referred to as the PT Barnum effect. (e.g., the advertising campaign slogan "Ford has a better idea!")

Guilt by association or Reductio ad Hitlerum

This is used to persuade a target audience to disapprove of an action or idea by suggesting that the concept is popular with groups hated, feared, or held in contempt by the target audience. Thus if a group that supports a specific policy is led to believe that undesirable, subversive, or contemptible people support the same policy, then the members of the group may decide to change their original position.

Half-truth

This is a deceptive statement that includes some element of truth. It comes in several forms: the message might be partly true, the message may be wholly accurate but only part of the whole truth, or it may utilize some deceptive element, such as a double meaning, especially if the intent is to deceive, evade, blame, or misrepresent the truth.

Information overload

The overabundance of information generated by modern technology threatens to make the target audience passive. When information overload occurs, it is likely that a reduction in decision quality will occur. This can have the same effect as secrecy, and certainly, in the short term and for democracies today, it might be considered more effective.

Intentional vagueness

Generalities are deliberately vague so that the audience may supply their own interpretations. The intention is to move the audience using vague phrases without analyzing their validity or attempting to determine their reasonableness or application. The intent is to cause people to draw their own interpretations rather than simply being presented with a clear idea. In trying to "figure out" the propaganda, the audience forgoes judgment of the statements given. Their validity, reasonableness, and application may still be considered.

Labeling

A euphemism is used when the propagandist attempts to increase a particular ideal's perceived quality, credibility, or belief. A dysphemism is used when the intent of the propagandist is to discredit, diminish the perceived quality, or hurt the perceived righteousness of the individual. By creating a "label," "category," or "faction" of a population, it is much easier to make an example of these larger bodies because they can uplift or defame the individual without actually incurring legal defamation. Labeling can be thought of as a sub-set of guilt by association, another logical fallacy.

Latitudes of acceptance

This technique will engender psychological reactance (simply hearing the argument will make the message even less acceptable) if a message is outside the bounds of acceptance for an individual or group.

There are two techniques for increasing the bounds of acceptance:

- First, one can take an even more extreme position, making more moderate positions seem more acceptable. This is similar to the door-in-the-face technique.
- Secondly, one can moderate one's own position to the edge of the latitude of acceptance and then, over time, slowly move to the position that was previously held.

Loaded language

Specific words and phrases with strong emotional implications are used to influence the audience, for example, using the word reforms rather than a more neutral word like changes.

Love bombing

(See also: Milieu control)

This is used to recruit members to a cult or ideology by having a group of individuals cut off a person from their existing social support and replace it entirely with members of the group. This second group deliberately bombards the person with affection in an attempt to isolate the person from their prior beliefs and value system.

Lying and deception

This can be the basis of many propaganda techniques including Ad Hominem arguments, Big-Lie, Defamation, Door-in-the-Face, Half-truth, Name-calling or any other technique that is based on dishonesty or deception.

Maging the news

This idea is consistent with the principle of classical conditioning and the concept of "Staying on Message." According to Adolf Hitler, "The most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly - it must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over."

Milieu control

This is an attempt to control the social environment and ideas through the use of social pressure.

Minimisation

This is the opposite of exaggeration. It is a type of deception involving denial coupled with rationalization in situations where complete denial is implausible.

Name-calling

This is used to incite fear and arouse prejudices in the audience with the intent that the bad names will cause hearers to construct a negative opinion about a group or set of beliefs or ideas that the propagandist wants hearers to denounce. The method is intended to provoke conclusions about a matter apart from impartial examinations of facts. Name-calling is thus a substitute for rational, fact-based arguments against an idea or belief on its own merits.

Non sequitur

A type of logical fallacy in which a conclusion is made out of an argument that does not justify it. All invalid arguments can be considered a special cases of non sequitur.

Obfuscation, intentional vagueness, confusion

These are deliberately vague statements that allow the audience to express their interpretations. The intention is to move the audience using vague phrases without analyzing their validity or attempting to determine their reasonableness or application. The intent is to cause people to draw their own interpretations rather than simply being presented with a clear idea. In trying to "figure out" the propaganda, the audience forgoes judgment of the statements given. Their validity, reasonableness, and application may still be considered.

Operant conditioning

This involves learning through imitation. For example, watching an appealing person buy products or endorse positions teaches a person to purchase the product or support the idea. Operant conditioning is the underlying principle behind the ad nauseam, slogan, and other repetition of public relations campaigns.

Oversimplification

These are favorable generalities that are used to provide simple answers to complex social, political, economic, or military problems.

Paltering

This is the active use of selective truthful statements to mislead.

Pensée unique

This is the enforced reduction of discussion used for overly simplistic phrases or arguments.

Quotes out of context

This is the selective editing of quotes used to change meanings. Political documentaries designed to discredit opponents or opposing political viewpoints often use this technique.

Rationalization

Individuals or groups may use favorable generalities to rationalize questionable acts or beliefs. Vague and pleasant phrases are often used to justify such actions or thoughts.

Red herring

This is the presentation of data or issues that, while compelling, are irrelevant to the argument at hand and then claiming that it validates the view.

Repetition

This is the repetition of a specific symbol or slogan, so the audience remembers it. This could be a jingle or an image placed on nearly everything in the picture/scene. This also includes using subliminal phrases, images, or other content in a propaganda piece.

Scapegoating

This assigns blame to an individual or group. This alleviates feelings of guilt from responsible parties or distracts attention from the need to fix the problem for which responsibility is being assigned.

Semantic Satiation

This can be used with the aim of lessening the impact of a damaging headline or sound byte.

Slogans

A slogan is a brief, striking phrase that may include labeling and stereotyping. Although slogans may be used to support reasoned ideas, they tend to act only as emotional appeals in practice.

Smears

This is an effort to damage or call into question someone's reputation by propounding negative propaganda. It can be applied to individuals or groups.

Stereotyping, name calling or labeling

This attempts to arouse prejudices in an audience by labeling the object of the propaganda campaign as something the target audience fears hates, loathes, or finds undesirable.

Straw man

This argument is an informal fallacy based on the misrepresentation of an opponent's position. To "attack a straw man" is to create the illusion of having refuted a proposition by substituting a superficially similar proposal (the "straw man") and refuting it without ever having actually denied the original position.

Testimonial

(See also: Damaging quotation)

These are quotations, in or out of context, especially cited to support or reject a given policy, action, program, or personality. The reputation or the role (expert, respected public figure, etc.) of the individual providing the statement is exploited. The testimonial places the official sanction of a respectable person or authority on a propaganda message. This is done to cause the target audience to identify with authority or to accept the authority's opinions and beliefs as their own.

Third party technique

(See also: Soft power)

This works on the principle that people are more willing to accept an argument from a seemingly independent source of information than from someone with a stake in the outcome. This concept is a marketing strategy commonly employed by Public Relations (PR) firms that involves placing an intended message in the "mouth of the media." The third-party technique can take many forms, ranging from hiring journalists to report the organization in a favorable light to using scientists within the organization to present their perhaps prejudicial findings to the public. Frequently, astroturf groups or front groups are used to deliver the message.

Thought-terminating cliché

A commonly used phrase, sometimes passing as folk wisdom, used to quell cognitive dissonance.

Transfer

Also known as association, is a technique of projecting positive or negative qualities (praise or blame) of a person, entity, object, or value onto another to make the second more acceptable or to discredit it. It evokes an emotional response, which stimulates the target to identify with recognized authorities. Often highly visual, this technique often utilizes symbols superimposed over other visual images.

Unstated assumption

This is used when the propaganda concept would seem less credible if explicitly stated. The concept is instead repeatedly assumed or implied.

Virtue words

(See also: Transfer (propaganda))

These are words in the target audience's value system that produce a positive image when attached to a person or issue. Peace, hope, happiness, security, wise leadership, freedom, "The Truth," etc., are virtue words. Many see religiosity as a virtue, making association with this quality effectively beneficial.

Whataboutism

This is a variant of the tu quoque logical fallacy that attempts to discredit an opponent's position by charging them with hypocrisy without directly refuting or disproving their argument, which is mainly associated with Soviet and Russian propaganda. When criticisms were leveled at the Soviet Union, the Soviet response would be "What about..." followed by an event in the Western world.

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Actives That Can Modify Or Change Human Behavior

Propaganda

This is the creation and distribution of select information to influence or persuade a predefined audience. This information is typically not objective and may be slanted in the statement of facts to encourage a particular opinion or sentiment. This content can also create an emotional response that differs widely from a perceived rational response to the fabricated information.

Psychological Operations

These are crafted activities that convey specific information and actions to predefined audiences. These activities are intended to influence the target audience's emotions, motives, and objective reasoning. This influence can ultimately alter or change the behavior of governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.

Music

This can boost individual performance, increase focus, provide the ability to cope with stress, or improve a person's mood during emotional trauma.

Subliminal Advertising

This form of marketing uses very intentional messaging, sounds, or visuals to convey a specific concept to an advertising audience. It is essential to make the audience receive a specially crafted idea in their mind that was not consciously portrayed within the advertisement itself.

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